

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A plurality of images and image features of each of the plurality of images are stored in a form correlated with the images in an external storage device of an  
5 image retrieval apparatus. In retrieval of a desired image from the plurality of images that have been stored in the external storage device, a plurality of image features regarding one image are acquired by varying, over a predetermined range, each of the image features  
10 that have been stored in the external storage device. A fuzzy image search is conducted by calculating the degree of similarity between each of the plurality of images and a retrieval source image based upon the image features that have been acquired and the image features  
15 of the retrieval-source image.